CHAPTER IV

Hospitality

Hospitality is one of the customs which is mentioned and praised by everyone who has visited the Caucasus, since it has been found to be practiced by all peoples of the country, regardless of their language, religion or ethnic differences. In discussing these customs, however, no writer has ever made any discrimination in the practice of these customs among the various tribes.

However, we think that the customs of hospitality as practiced by the Georgians of the Highlands and Lowlands alike are different in some way from those of the other mountaineers of the Caucasus. If we review the customs of hospitality as practiced by the Georgians, and on the other hand, by the other mountaineers, we shall see at once the difference. With the Georgians, every stranger may be sure to find a genuine and hearty reception, in every corner of Georgia and among all its different groups. No questions are asked and no introduction is necessary. On the other hand, with the Circassians and the other mountaineers, in order to enjoy the privileges of their hospitality, a stranger must be introduced by someone, if not personally at least *in absentia.* A guest is known to them by the name of *kunak,* called *conaco* in the writings of the Italian missionary, Georgio Interiano, who describes the life and customs of the Circassians (16th century). Besides Interiano, the customs of hospitality are related by other travelers. They all stress the high esteem for the guest, which often reaches sanctity. The Englishman, Bell, in the beginning of his book (1840), mentions that it was necessary for him and his companions, when landing on the Circassian coast, to name the Circassian whose friends (*kunaks*) they were. Otherwise, he remarks, they could not count on the hospitality of the people, because every stranger who had no *kunaks* among the Circassians was at once seized, taken into slavery and kept a slave or sold to the Turks. People who have

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visited the Circassians have stated that these people consider their customs of hospitality as sacred, and that there were no examples of the violation of this custom by the mistreatment or molestation of a guest by his host.

In describing his prejudices against the Circassians, and the many good traits in their manner of life and customs, as he actually found them, Taitbout de Marigny[1] writes about the sacred sentiments of hospitality: "Combien je ne trompais, et qu'il est respectable et sacré le sentiment que les Tcherkesses attachent à l'hospitalité! On voit chez eux cette vertu mise en action, tandis que chez nous elle n'est que dans les écrits des philosophy." "The Kabardian," writes Klaproth,[2] "is a most scrupulous observer of the custom of hospitality and when he has taken any person under his protection, or received him as his guest, the latter may repose implicit confidence in him, and trust his life in his hands: never will he betray or deliver him up to his enemies." Similar information may be found in the reports and writings of everyone who has visited these people.

The sanctity of the person of a guest as that term is understood among the Georgians. The Pshavs and Khevsurs, like many other mountain folk, place a high value upon hospitality.[3] They regard hospitality as something sacred.[4] "To them a guest is a sacred person," writes Prince Vakhoust, in describing the life and customs of the Georgians of Kartli; "they are hospitable and love strangers."

Numerous other writers have commented on the hospitality of the Georgians and other mountaineers of the Caucasus. The sanctity of this virtue is manifest in the everyday language, songs, and literature of the people. For example, the writer well remembers a song, popular among the college men of the Caucasus, which was sung in the Russian language and which said that the guest is sent by God. The first lines are as follows:

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[1] Taitbout de Marigny: 263.
[2] Klaproth: 318.
[3] Eristov: 129; Gurko-Kriajin: 265.
[4] Zisserman: 213.

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CHAPTER VI

Marriage

Reviewing the marriage ceremonies observed by the Georgian 581
Highlanders, we notice three distinct main parts in the procedure: the match-making, the betrothal, and the wedding.

The marriage is not a private but a communal affair: it represents a contract. The contracting parties are not separate individuals but social groups of families, or even whole communities. All relatives of the young pair take an active interest in the business. The family of the bride is interested not only in receiving the bride-price from the bridegroom, but also in the personality of the groom and the possible advantages of the union for the entire group. On the other side, the relatives of the bridegroom are busy supplying him with the necessary resources in order to meet the expenses of the celebration attendant upon all marriage ceremonies, so that in this case also we have the clearly marked group solidarity manifested in the assistance given the individual by the group as a whole. This last-mentioned trait of communal support of the bridegroom by his kinsmen is characteristic of all groups of Georgian Highlanders.

Although a certain amount of the bride-price must be paid by 583
the man in acquiring his wife in the communities of the Georgian Highlanders, nevertheless we cannot say that they follow the practice of marriage by purchase as is done by other mountaineers of the Caucasus. The price paid by the Georgian for his bride is a minimum amount and is far outweighed by the special gifts presented to the bride by her relatives and friends, and by the dowry of the bride which represents her personal capital (called *sathavno*) and which she brings with her to the home of her future husband.

Contrary to the custom of the Georgians, the bride-price among 583
the other mountaineers of the Caucasus has a strictly established 171
value, paid in money or its equivalent in nature, and representing marriage by purchase. For the sake of comparison, let us consider

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583 171 the valuation and nature of payment of the bride-price as practiced by some of these peoples.[1] In examining the data we see that among the peoples with developed and stratified social organization the bride-price also varies, usually according to the social standing of the bride and according to such personal qualities as beauty, age, and whether she is a widow or single woman.

The amount of *kalim* paid for the bride was evaluated lately in Russian rubles: The Circassians adopted this medium of evaluation after the Russian conquest of the Caucasus, as may be seen from the fact that payment was made in rubles. However, prior to the time of Russian domination, there was no monetary system and all transactions, including the payment of the bride-price, were made in nature. The standard of value varied among the different peoples of the Caucasus. It represented the most valued objects of the country in question, but payment was usually made with common objects.[2] Thus, among the Circassians the payment to be made was valued in arms and was paid out *de facto* with slaves.

583 567 171 Here, for example, is the table of *kalim* paid for a Circassian princess valued in arms and paid for with women slaves, in number from six to fifteen:

(1) The best coat of mail valued at two women slaves.

(2) Another coat of mail valued at one woman slave.

(3) Arm mails—one woman slave.

(4) Arm mails and helmet—one woman slave.

(5) Sword—one woman slave.

(6) Sword (ordinary, simpler than the previous one)—one woman slave.

(7) Five horses—five women slaves. The value of each horse was equivalent to a woman slave.

Thus the *kalim* for a Circassian princess consisted of from six to fifteen women slaves, and sometimes even more. For the daughter of a nobleman (*uzden*), the *kalim* was from 800 to 1,200 rubles, and for a peasant girl from 200 to 600 rubles. With the

583 171 passage of time and changes in living conditions, the amount of the bride-price (*kalim*) was changed, so that at the end of the

[1] Malinin: 21-61.

[2] See details in the section dealing with "weregild."

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nineteenth century the *kalim* paid for a princess amounted to 500 rubles; and for widows, 300 rubles; for the daughter of a first-grade nobleman (*uzdens* of the first rank), 350 rubles; and for widows, 200 rubles.

Among the Circassian tribes of Shapsugs and Natukhais the *kalim* paid for a princess consisted of from 50 to 60 *skha;* and for a common girl, 25 *skha.* The standard value of a *skha* was approximately 60 to 80 oxen. Among those Circassian groups which had no gradations in the social scale, *kalim* could be paid with slave boys and girls; thus a princess cost from three to eight boys or girls, and a girl of common origin, one or two. In case slave children were not available, the *kalim* could be paid with a certain number of cattle or other domestic animals.

Among the Kabardians after the Russian conquest, the bride-price for a princess was 1,500 rubles; for the princess of a not-powerful family, 700 to 1,000 rubles; for the daughter of an *uzden,* 400 to 1,000 rubles; for a common girl, not more than 300 rubles.

Among the Chechens of Daghestan the bride-price is called *urdali.* The highest amount paid for a bride was 250 rubles, but in the time of Shamol, according to his orders, the bride-price was reduced until it reached the low figure of two cows.

Among the Ossets the bride-price is called *irad,* and was once very high, reaching even 1,000 rubles or 100 oxen in amount, but since the Russian conquest of the Caucasus it has declined in value, amounting in some Ossetic communities to the sum of 440 rubles. In 1866 a special meeting was held of the three communities of northern Ossetia, where the normal amount of the bride-price (*irad*) was fixed at 200 rubles. Formerly, in cases where the groom had no means to pay for his bride, he could pay with his labor. He was obliged to work for the family of his future wife for eight years.

The bride-price is paid by the Pshavs generally with cows: from three to five cows for a single girl and not more than three cows for a widow. A Pshav girl normally marries at the age of 17 to 20 years. In the old times the choice of a husband was made by her parents and she was obliged to marry the man of their

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

the Georgian nation, as we shall see in reviewing their customs in protecting women and children against evil forces.

As we noted previously, similar beliefs concerning the matter under discussion are held by other peoples of the Caucasus and by the peoples of Asia Minor. Thus the Abkhazians[15] are convinced that the evil spirit whom they call *abu-ikou* attacks women in childbed.

The mountaineers of Daghestan[16] have a being similar to the *ali* of the Georgians, who is regarded as very dangerous for women in childbed and is called *Alpab*, meaning "red woman." *Alpab* is presented as a creature of very small stature, about the size of a three-year-old girl, with long red hair touching her heels. Although *Alpab* is beautiful and seems to be good-natured and harmless, in reality she is very malignant and cruel, and tries with all her power to destroy the human race.

The Jewish mountaineers of Daghestan[17] also believe in the existence of evil spirits of the female sex, similar in character to *Alpab* in Daghestan and called by them *Dedei-ol*, meaning the "mother-ol."

The Turks of Azerbaijan believe in the existence of a creature which destroys mothers and new-born babies, and which is called *Al-anasi*.

The Turks of Shemakha district[18] have a female being called *Al* with a cat's snout and red hair. She pulls out women's hair and throws it into the water and kills babies by poisoning them with her own milk.

The Udins of Vartashen[19] think that there is a creature called *Hal* which attacks the woman with child. *Hal* tries to kill the woman by taking out her heart and liver.

The Talishes[20] of the southern part of the Lencoran district also have a belief in the existence of an angry, bloodthirsty creature who attacks the mother and baby. She is represented as a black

[15] Derjavin: 15.
[16] Mamedov.
[17] Anisimov: 43.
[18] Djegangir.
[19] Bejanov: 245, 260.
[20] Chursin: e, 25.

1 [see cat. 116, p100 -- Analyst]
2 [see cat. 116, p. 100 -- Analyst]

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RII Georgia RII .

woman and is called *Alajen*. *Alajen* has large eyes and such enormous breasts that she casts them over her shoulders. She enters the room where the mother and baby are and frightens the woman by her appearance and sometimes even beats her and kills the baby.

The Kurds of Azerbaijan[21] believe that the creature called *Halasisi* attacks the woman in childbirth and tears her heart and lungs out and washes them in the river. The Kurds of Armenia[22] believe in the same creature and call her *Alk*. Under the same name, *Alk* or *Alk'u*, she is known to the Armenians also.

The most gruesome tribe of the demoniac world of the Armenian myths was that of 'Als'. . . . They appear as half-animal and half-human beings, shaggy and bristly. They are male and female, and have a mother. . . . The 'Als' have a king living in Abysses, whom they serve. . . . The 'als' were formerly disease demons who somehow came to restrict their baleful activities to unborn children and their mothers. They attack the latter in childbirth, scorching her ears, pulling out her liver, and strangling her along with the unborn baby. They also steal unborn children of seven months, at which time they are supposed in the East to be fully formed and mature. . . . Identical, or at least very closely connected with the 'als' is 'Thelpa,' who by sitting upon a woman in childbirth causes the child to become black and faint and to die.[23]

The Persians[24] believe that the *Al* has the appearance of a tall, beautiful girl with red hair, from which is derived the name *Al*, meaning red in general. As she attacks the woman in travail, she rends her heart.

Coming to later Pahlavi-Parsi books,[25] we find that the *Shayast la-Shayast* (X, H, XII, 11) directs that, when it is known that a woman has become pregnant, a fire shall be maintained most carefully in the house. The house of the family that does not keep the fire properly has fewer pregnant women in it (*Shayast la-Shayast*, XII.3). The Sad-dar (XVI.1) also gives this direction. The

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[21] *Ibid.*, c, 4.
[22] Egiazarov: 59.
[23] Ananikian: 88-9.
[24] Chursin: c, 26.
[25] Modi: 660.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

remnant of this injunction survives in the present custom, among modern Parsis, on the occasion of the completion of the fifth and seventh months of pregnancy, when a lamp of clarified butter is lighted in the house by some families. The reason assigned for this is that the fire so kindled in the house keeps out *daevas*, i. e., evil influences from the house.

The Babylonians[26] believed in the existence of the dreadful child-slaying creature, the demoness called *Lamashtu*. Her character was inherited by a creature prominent in later Jewish Demonology. *Lilith*[27] was the head of the female demons and was regarded as the incubus and with a demoniac first wife of Adam, who became in the course of time the demon who bewitched, stole, changed, and killed both children and mothers in child-birth. There were many demons who sought new-born children, but the most dangerous among them was the above mentioned *Lilith*.

Among the Summerians[28] the most dreaded of all demons was *Lamme*, or *Lamashtu* in Acadian, the female vampire who slew children, drank the blood of men, and ate their flesh. This name passed into Greek mythology as *Lamia*, derived from another name for her, *Lam-me-a*.

Believing in the existence of malignant spirits and the danger of their attack upon women in childbed and their babies, the people have adopted such special protective devices as certain actions, objects, words, and even the use of colors regarded as possessing magical powers.

One of the customs used to protect mother and child against evil aggressions is the day-and-night watch.

The first days after the child's birth are regarded by the people as the most dangerous, because the mother and child are so weak that they cannot resist the demoniac forces. Therefore, they are carefully guarded both by day and by night.

The Georgians of Imerthi consider the first fifteen days as the most critical in the life of the child, and therefore exercise special watchfulness during this period. In order to protect the baby

[26] Langdon: 366.
[27] Gaster: 655.
[28] Langdon: 366.

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every night during its first two weeks of life, a group comprising mostly young people is assembled in the room with the mother and pass the nights in games, dancing and music. These nightly vigils have a special name in Georgian, *hamis theva,* meaning "watch night."

The Georgians of Guria[29] also observe the custom of *hamis theva,* but only for one night, either one week or two weeks after the child is born.

The Georgians of Megrelia also have the custom of observing the night watch, which is called in their language *serish takhua,* meaning "vigilant night." Literally the Megrelian expression, *serish takhua,* means in English, "breaking of a night," from the Megrelian words, *seri* (night) and the verb, *takhua* (to break).

Besides the Georgians, the same custom of night watch is observed by other peoples of the Caucasus. For example, the Karachais[30] regard the first seven days after the birth of the child as the most dangerous, and in order to protect the child from the attack of evil spirits the young girls are assembled in the room with the mother and baby, and pass the time in games while watching the child. The seventh night is regarded by them as the most dangerous and has the special name, *stim keche* or *bastiri klangan,* which means "the night of nightmare."

Among the Talish, on the sixth day after the birth of the child, to protect it from the attack of the evil spirit called *Shasha,* the relatives and friends of the family keep the watch-night. They keep the light the whole night through in the room where the baby is, and place a fish net over the crib. In case they fall asleep, they place bread and milk at the entrance of the room, on the porch, so that, as they think, *Shasha* will eat it and will not touch the child.

Besides watching the mother and child against possible attack by the evil spirits, the people resort for protection to the magical powers of different objects. Among them the most important in the Caucasus is plain iron, or such objects as daggers, sabres, sickles, axes, awls, knives (especially with black handles), etc.

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[29] Mamaladze: 155.
[30] Chursin: e, 28.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

791 animals, he usually selects the best breed known in the community.
32C If after consultation with the blacksmith and presentation of the offering the sick man recovers, the result is fame and new presents and offerings to the blacksmith and his anvil; but in the event the man dies, the explanation is that the relatives of the sick person did not know how to appease the anvil, or they did not apply to the right blacksmith's shop and anvil, as it should have been, etc. These superstitious beliefs of the people give to the blacksmiths, besides the profits mentioned, a further advantage in that they may keep the doors of their homes and shops wide open during the day or night without fear of having their property stolen, despite the fact that the people are not very strict in the proper interpretation of the words "mine" and "thine."

● [171] Beliefs similar to those just described concerning the supernatural power of iron are found among other peoples of the Caucasus. For example, the Circassians have a special deity, the protector of blacksmiths, called *Tliebse,* about whom M. Taitbout de Marigny[39] relates that "le jour de sa fete, on fait, en son honneur, des libations sur un soc et une hache. . . ."

783 Besides using iron as a protective power against evil creatures,
843 the people use fire also. Thus the Georgians of Imerethi[40]
372 believe that the evil being of the woods, called *chinka,* is afraid of the fire. In the evening, no one is permitted to enter the room of a pregnant woman without previously warming himself before the fire in the fire-place. If one neglects to take this precaution, the evil spirit may follow the newcomer into the room and drive the woman mad.

Among the Georgians of Meskhethi,[41] if a traveler comes at night into a house where there is a woman with child, he must first cleanse himself of the evil spirit (*avi suli*) who may otherwise enter the room with him. In order to avoid this danger and to cleanse the traveler, he is required to jump over a burning pile and allow himself to be sprinkled with holy water.

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[39] Taitbout de Marigny: b, 309.
[40] Mashurko: 369.
[41] Khakhanov: b, 11.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

The same cleansing power of fire is used by the Khevsur woman at the time of her purification when she leaves the menstrual hut (*samrevlo*) and returns home with her baby.

Many other peoples of the Caucasus share the Georgians' belief in the supernatural power of fire.[42] Thus, for example, the Abkhazians,[43] in order to protect women in childbed from the evil spirit, called *abn-ikou,* ask the help of the god of the house-hearth, called *ajakhar,* promising him a thank-offering for his help.

The people also believe in the protective power of a rope in the shape of a snake. For example, in the district of Sakatali, a rope resembling a snake is laid around the woman in childbed and the people continually fire their guns, because they believe that evil spirits are afraid of snakes and gun-shots.

In some parts of Georgia red thread is also used as a defense against the evil spirits attacking women in childbed. In such cases, the hip of the woman in travail is bound with red thread as a means of providing sympathetic magic which will protect her from evil spirits[44] who, as the people think, cause the suffering.

It should be interesting to mention briefly the belief of the Georgians, not only in the magical power of red thread, but in the red color generally. Almost every contagious disease is understood by the people to be sent not merely by evil spirits but as personifications of the spirits themselves.[45] Therefore, to cure the sick it is necessary, in their opinion, to please the spirits. The spirits are called *batonebi,* meaning "lords," the plural form of the Georgian word, *batoni,* meaning a lord. In order to appease and beseech the *batonebi*[46] to depart from sick persons, they try to please them with songs, music, prayers, decorating the room with gay colors, putting on a new dress, keeping everything clean, avoiding any disturbances, etc.

The principal color in decorating and dressing is red. This color predominates, and red thread is used as a protective

[42] Chursin: f.
[43] Derjavin: 14-15.
[44] Jashvili: 63.
[45] Stepanov: 88-9.
[46] Mamaladze: 45-6.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

not by way of criticism, that, as helpful and interesting as it is, in my opinion the first half of the work, in which the author describes the customs in detail, is more acceptable than the views expressed in the second half, where the author attempts to explain the origin and meaning of the customs in question.

The above-stated opinion of the necessity of caution is intensified and the making of conclusions becomes much more difficult and complicated if we take into consideration the fact that similar customs and attitudes toward women to those of the Georgian Highlanders in the Caucasus are found also among many other peoples who are not related to the peoples of the Caucasus at all, and in many cases are total strangers, living in far removed parts of the world, under entirely different living conditions, such as the Eskimos and Indians of North America, in New Guiana, Polynesia, and among the various Paleo-Asiatic tribes of Siberia.

As an example, if we take only the customs connected with menstruation and childbirth as practiced by the various groups of the Eskimos of North America, we will notice their close similarity to the customs existing among the Georgian Highlanders of the Caucasus.

Like the Georgian Highlanders, the Eskimos regard woman at the times of menstruation and childbirth as unclean; she is avoided by the hunters, is obliged to live apart, and is subject to many regulations and taboos, as is shown by the investigations made by Professor Fr. Boas,[61] C. F. Hall,[62] E. W. Hawkes,[63] A. L. Kroeber,[64] T. Mathiassen,[65] L. M. Turner,[66] E. M. Weyer,[67] and others.

We shall not attempt a general explanation of the origin of the customs regulating the sexual discrimination on a religious basis,[1] but will mention, in conclusion, that these customs are preserved

[1] [for detail see cat. III, p 90ff — Analyst]

[61] Boas: 120, 260.
[62] Hall: 315.
[63] Hawkes: 134.
[64] Kroeber: 313.
[65] Mathiassen: 211.
[66] Turner: 208.
[67] Weyer: 372-7.

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in the inaccessible mountain regions among the rough Highlanders/71 and are lingering as feeble remnants of bygone customs in the/84 more civilized Lowlands. On the other hand, we notice that the boundaries of the regions in which these customs are practiced coincide precisely with the limits of that part of the Caucasus which was under Persian domination, and are absent entirely in the northwestern part of the country among the Circassians, who were never under Persian rule. This distinction should be noted in view of the fact that the Circassians had many customs and beliefs similar to those of the Georgian Highlanders.

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224 476 in which many hunters take part. In such cases, if only one of the hunters kills an animal, he gets the head, neck and pelt, while the remainder is divided equally among them all, with the assistant of the man who killed the animal having the right to choose his portion according to his own taste.

224 476 675 There is another interesting hunting custom among the Svans. When two hunters meet while hunting, if the meeting is spontaneous and not pre-arranged, they may enter into a mutual agreement with the Svan words, *sev esh'khvi,* meaning "one success." After this the fulfillment of the agreement is binding on both of them and has the character of a legal contract. They are thus obliged to divide the spoils of the hunt equally, even if it is killed by only one of them.

They hunt separately all day and meet again in the evening at the place agreed upon. The division of the spoil is not obligatory at the second meeting if the agreement was not concluded at the first, as established by custom, but the successful hunter may "treat" his partner with a portion of meat if he wishes to do so.

224 776 171 Besides the Svans, the other groups of Georgian Highlanders—the Khevsurs, Pshavs, and Tushes—believe in the existence of spirits and protectors of game and hunters. These spirits are called *angelozi.*

Similar beliefs are found among other groups in the Georgian nation as well as among other peoples in the Caucasus, such as the Abkhazes, Ossetes, Circassians, and others.

Thus the Georgians of Megrelia[10] believe in the existence of the "Queen of the Forest," called *Tgashi mapa,* and represented as a beautiful woman with long hair. She is regarded as the patroness of all wild animals, and on her good will depends the success of the hunter. The Abkhazians have a patron of all game called *Ajvepsha.*[11]

224 192 171 It should be noted that in addition to the belief in the existence of forest deities and spirits which protect wild animals, some of the people of the Caucasus possess also a secret hunting language.

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[10] Teptsov: b, 12.
[11] Zvanbai: Kavkaz, 81-2.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

This point, is discussed by J. Potocki,[12] J. Reineggs,[13] J. Klaproth,[14] Lulie,[15] A. Dirr,[16] and others. The secret language of hunters, as used by the Abkhazians, was recorded by A. Dirr, and that of the Circassians has been recorded by all the other writers named above.

A contract of partnership among the Georgian Highlanders, similar to that described in the account of the hunting expeditions, is practiced also in their field work. In the eastern part of Georgia, partnerships are formed for the ploughing of fields, because the ploughing in that part of the country demands considerable expense and depends upon the nature of the ground and the construction of the plow itself, which is cumbersome and requires many hands and animals.

In the eastern part of Georgia the cultivation of land is very expensive. Thus, in order to operate a plow it is necessary to have eight ploughmen, ten pair of oxen, five or six workmen, and many other things. Therefore, only wealthy people are in position to accomplish this work without assistance. The people who are unable to do this because of their limited material resources, find a way out of the difficulty by forming a partnership for the execution of the work. One home supplies the plow-shred, called *sakveti,* and two pairs of oxen, called *kevari-khari.* Another supplies leather straps, another supplies the driver of the plow, the fourth is the ploughman himself, who also brings two oxen with him, etc. In such a manner a number of homes put together one plow, called in the Georgian, *guthani,* and they plough for everyone who takes part in the partnership, in turn.[17] In Khevsuria and Pshavia, where the land is cultivated with small, light plows, with only two oxen, it may happen that two men will be able to get the necessary things together: each furnishes an ox, and iron parts of the plow are bought jointly by both partners. The same manner of ploughing, as practiced in the eastern part of

[12] Klaproth: b, 381.
[13] Potocki: 168-69.
[14] Dirr.
[15] Lulje.
[16] Reineggs.
[17] Khakhanov: c, 192-95.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

custom we have mutual assistance with the work, its accomplishment and plenty of "good time." It is interesting to watch a *nadoba* when a group of twenty men get together singing loudly.[19]

The custom of mutual assistance in the field work, the *nadoba*, by the Megrelians, is described also by the Italian missionary of the seventeenth century, Archangelo Lamberti,[20] who lived among the Megrelians for many years. "The land is ploughed and sowed with such calculation," writes Lamberti, "that the harvesting should be finished on the day of Saints Peter and Paul, the principal holiday in Megrelia. Because of the dampness, the weeds grow in abundance, and plenty of work is necessary to clear the ground of them. As this task requires promptness, the separate families would not be able to accomplish it with their own force, and therefore they invite their neighbors to assist them. The villagers who begin the weeding out of the fields invite those neighbors whose fields are not yet ready for the same work, and they are assisted in turn in the accomplishment of the same work when their fields are ready."

There is mutual assistance in Megrelia also in husking the maize. The people assemble at the home where the work is to be done, and after a day's work in the field, the host prepares a big supper, at which all the people who take part in the work have a good time, singing and dancing until late at night.

The forming of partnerships in field work exists not only among the Georgians, as has been described, but also among the other peoples of the Caucasus, such as the Ossetes[21] and others. The partnership for the execution of field work is called *goi*[22] by the Avars; by the Laks of Daghestan mutual assistance in the field work is called *marsha*.[23] The Kumiks of the Terek district practiced mutual assistance in harvesting corn, which they call *bulka*.

Reciprocal assistance and co-operation as described above are evident not only in the field and home work, and not only in one

[19] Borozdin: 7.
[20] Lamberti: 57.
[21] Kovalevsky:
[22] Lvov: 13-14.
[23] Omarov: 916.

Georgia RII
Khevsurs, Pschv,
Tushin

C. G. [713] Some had the sign of the cross upon their shields, so that they looked exactly like medieval European knights and Crusaders.

C. G. 764 171 Up in the country of the Khevsurs a few very ancient churches can be found; near these, often isolated, stand some typically Khevsurian tomb structures or burial chapels unique in the Caucasus. Funeral ceremonies held by the Khevsurs are (or were ?) often accompanied by horse races, an ancient custom of horse-breeding nomads of the steppes. (This custom is reminiscent of the "dokhia" [δόχια] of some Turkic tribes in the plains near the Altai, described by the Byzantine envoy Menandros Protector, who was sent in 568 to the Great-Khan of the Türküt in the Altai region, a territory which is now part of northwestern Mongolia.) Perhaps the Khevsurs borrowed this custom from the Alans, the nomadic ancestors of the present-day Oset'i.

S'vanet'ians

C. G. 162 101 Another K'art'velian group which in its mountainous seclusion has preserved numerous ancient customs and traditions is the Svans (or Shvan, Strabon's Soanes [Σοάνες]), who live in the high valleys of the Ingur and Ts'khenis-Tskhali, just south of the central high massifs of the Caucasus, between Gvandra and Shkhara. Their language is the most archaic of all the K'art'velian tongues. The Svans are

C. [141] outstanding for their height; two meters is not rare.